

Rule 13.1 states: "the international application shall relate to one invention or to a group of inventions so linked as to form a single general inventive concept."

Furthermore, PCT Rule 13.4 expressly states that: "subject to Rule 13.1, it shall be permitted to include in the same international application a reasonable number of dependent claims claiming specific forms of the invention claimed in an independent claim, even where the features of any dependent claim could be considered as constituting in themselves an invention."

The Election of Species Requirement is a convention specific to U.S. National Patent Application Examination practice. PCT Rule 13.1 specifically contemplates the single examination of a group of inventions so linked as to form a single general inventive concept, and PCT Rule 13.4 specifically requires examination of species claims within a single general inventive concept. Nothing in the PCT or its rules permits issuing an Election of Species Requirement. Any United States practice (such an Election of Species Requirement) or interpretation of the rule which is different from or in addition to the unity of practice as delineated in PCT Unity Rules 13.1-13.4 is necessarily in violation of PCT Article 27. Species practice is not provided for under PCT Rules 13.1-13.4 and is contrary to PCT Article 27, and the present Election of Species Requirement is accordingly prohibited by Article 27.

Additionally, Applicants assert that the application should not be divided into six species. Fig. 1 represents the prior art and, thus, is not applicable to any of the claims. Also, the embodiment of Fig. 2 is no longer claimed.

The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the Election of Species Requirement and to examine all of the species and claims in this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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